

REVIEW

by Prof. Penka Todorova Kaneva, PhD,

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of the materials submitted for participation

in a competition for the academic position of “Professor”

at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”

in the professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of Education in...

**(Methodology of Foreign Language Education in a Digital Environment –
English and Turkish)**

Grounds for submitting the review: By order № RD 38-664/06.12.2024 of the Rector of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” I have been appointed a member of the scientific jury in the competition for the academic position of “Professor” in the professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of Education in... (Methodology of Foreign Language Education in a Digital Environment – English and Turkish), announced in the State Gazette, issue 88 of 18.10.2024. for the needs of the “Methodology of Foreign Language Teaching Department” at the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology. Prof. Danail Kirilov Danov, DSc, is the only candidate in the competition.

I. GENERAL REVIEW OF THE SUBMITTED MATERIALS

1. Application details

Prof. Danail Danov, DSc, submitted all documents for the competition on time. The documents comply with the minimum national requirements (of the Law for DASRB) and the additional requirements of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” for holding the academic position of “professor” in the scientific and professional field of the competition.

2. Information about the candidate

Danail Danov graduated with a Master of Arts in Turkology and a second major in English from the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in 1988. He also has an MA in Area Studies: History and Politics from SOAS, University of London, UK (1994); an MA in Society and Politics from Central European University, Prague, Czech Republic (1992). In 2011, after successfully defending his PhD thesis "Modern Technologies and Teaching via the Internet as an Alternative to the Traditional Teaching Methods", he received a doctoral degree in the professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Theory of Education and Didactics) at Sofia University. Danail Danov expanded and deepened his scientific research and in 2019 received the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" for the successfully defended dissertation work on the subject "Media Literacy: Genesis, Reconsidering the Experience, Challenges and Perspectives".

The candidate possesses additional expertise related to the requirements of the competition announced, acquired during the training course in Radio Netherlands (2002), his scientific research at the Center for International Media Assistance, National Endowment for Democracy in Washington (2011), the training course "Intensive teacher training in key digital competences" (Varna, 2023).

A significant part of Danov's professional experience is related to the sectors of: "Media and Communications", "TV and Show Business", "Public Radio Broadcasting", "Commercial Radio Broadcasting", and "Supporting Democratic Development, Charity". Some of his working positions over the years are: "Executive Director of the Communications Development and Human Resources Centre", "Programme Director of the Media Development Centre", "Deputy Chairman of The Board, Chief Secretary and acting General Director of the Bulgarian National Radio", "Coordinator of the Media Programme at the Open Society Foundation", "Deputy Editor-in-chief at Express Radio", etc.

Since 2014 Danail Danov has been transferring the development of his professional competencies from the world of media communications into the academic world – he is a full-time lecturer at the Department of Pre-school Education and Media Pedagogy, Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts (Sofia University), where he started working as a chief assistant. He obtained his habilitation in 2016, he was awarded the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" in the professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Media Pedagogy) in 2019, then he won

the competition for the academic degree of “Professor” in the same professional field in 2020.

3. General review of the scientific work and achievements of the candidate

Danail Danov participates in the competition for a professor with 13 publications which, by genre and indicators of the minimum national requirements, can be divided into: two monographs, one of which is based on his doctoral thesis, two articles published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information - Web of Science, seven articles and reports published in non-peer-reviewed journals with scientific review or publication in edited collective volumes, two chapters in collective monographs published abroad. He is the sole author of 8 publications and a co-author of 5.

The scientific production submitted for review does not include or repeat publications submitted in previous procedures for acquiring a scientific title and academic position; its quantitative dimensions comply with the requirements for participation in the competition, regulated in the minimum national requirements (under Art. 2b, para 2 and 3 of the Law for DASRB) and the additional requirements of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” for holding the academic position of “professor” in the scientific and professional field of the competition.

The publications can be divided into the following topical areas (their numbers correspond to the numbers of publications submitted for review):

- ✓ Theory and Practice of Media Literacy – (№ 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12);
- ✓ Teaching and Learning in a Digital Environment – (№ 4, 8, 12);
- ✓ Multiculturalism, Interculturalism - (№ 5, 6)
- ✓ Turkology – (№ 13).

The content and research problems in the candidate’s publications correspond to the subject area of the announced competition.

Evidence of the candidate’s professional and scientific expertise is his rich project work dedicated to media literacy and culture. He declares participation as a national coordinator, an expert, or a mentor in five international projects:

European Media Coach Initiative, 2020-2023, ERASMUS +; European Safe Online Initiative, 2021-2023, ERASMUS +, Teacher 4.0 Digital Age, 2022-2026, ERASMUS + ; School and Family Alliance: a holistic approach to tackle learning disadvantage through school and family collaboration, 2022-2025; MODERN-@: Modernization in Partnership Through Digitalization of the Academic Ecosystem, 2022-2024.

The candidate has been a member of the Bulgarian Coalition for Media Literacy since 2018.

4. Review and assessment of the teaching experience of the candidate

Prof. Danail Danov gives lectures in Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral programmes in three faculties at Sofia University: Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts, Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, and Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication.

A significant part of the academic subjects he teaches is in English. Moreover, these subjects are directly related to the profile of the competition announced:

- ✓ Digital Media, Media Pedagogy, Information and Communication technologies and Work in a Digital Environment, Foundations of Media Pedagogy, Digital and Media Literacy, Digital Culture and Education, Media Pedagogy – Educational Media and Innovations – at the Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts;
- ✓ Media and Information Literacy – at the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication;
- ✓ Information and communication technology and work in a digital environment, Media coach, New Trends in Foreign Language Teaching – at the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology.

Recognition for the quality of Danail Danov academic achievements are the lectures he delivered at foreign universities: Tokyo University, Japan (7.05.2024), Universidade Federal Fluminense, Niteroi, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (01.07.2024), Kazakh National University (KAZNU), Almaty, Kazakhstan, (13.10.2023), Mahatma Gandhi Institute, Mauritius (12-19.06.2023), Alexander Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany (17.04.2023), Bukhara University, Bukhara, Uzbekistan (16.10.2022), University of Trnava, Slovakia (26.01.2022).

Due to his scientific expertise and teaching skills in the last two years, four PhD students successfully defended their PhD thesis on topics related to Media Literacy.

5. Analysis of the content of the submitted publications and the scientific and practical achievements of the candidate in this competition

The habilitation monograph submitted for the competition is titled: "Foundations of Media Pedagogy: a Guide to the World of Digital Culture and its Tools" (Sofia University Publishing House, Sofia, 2023, ISBN-978-054-07-5855). The author's ambition, admitted in the summaries of his publications which he provided to the Scientific Jury, is to contribute to the adequate understanding of Media Literacy as a 21st-century-key competence, as well as to explain the significance of Media Pedagogy as a scientific field.

In my opinion, he achieved his ambition. In his monograph, he identifies real problems that are talked about little or not at all; gives definitions of scientific terms from the research field of Media Pedagogy, taking into account the specificity of Bulgarian education context; not only raises hot questions for reflection on a personal and community level (specialists, parents, media users, etc.) but offers age-appropriate solutions for solving articulated problems.

The author's reflection on some leading practices in the field of digital media applications sends clear messages about the role and place of modern means of communication and information, the possibilities they offer, and the dangers they hide.

The author has seven more publications dedicated to the theory and practice of Media Literacy. Danov analyzes the state of media literacy in Bulgaria and gives arguments for developing media literacy as a scientific field; he also outlines the dynamics in the relationship between media literacy and Media Pedagogy and describes a model for implementing educational technology into practice for training Media Literacy teachers. The author examines the possibility of media literacy development at different ages regarding the potential of foreign language teaching and gives recommendations for countering disinformation.

The topic of teaching and learning in a digital environment is explored in three of Danov's publications. The author reveals the opportunities and challenges of teaching and learning in a digital environment; analyzes the educational

experience gained during COVID-19, and provides practical guidance to all parents who want to learn new skills and competencies for using digital devices. The contribution of these publications in a practical and applied aspect is undeniable.

Among the publications on the topic of multiculturalism and interculturalism, I highlight the article “Multiculturalism, Integrative Educational Models, Interculturalism”, published in the scientific proceedings “Linguodidactic Records” (Sofia University Publishing House, 2023, p. 357-363). I find clarification of the concepts with similar but slightly different nuance meanings – multiculturalism and interculturalism – extremely useful for educational practice. Moreover, some effective models for modern teaching and learning in a multicultural environment are presented.

In conclusion, I would like to say that due to his research, teaching and project work prof. Danail Danov leaves the impression of an erudite scholar, a competent lecturer, an active participant in international and national research projects.

Danail Danov is a scientist known both at home and abroad and there is abundant evidence of this: his publications in referenced and indexed editions; his lectures given at universities in Bulgaria and abroad; his presence in the scientific teams as a co-author of monographs, published abroad, as well as the noted citations of his works (10 in number), five of which are in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in a world-famous database (Web of Science).

6. Critical remarks, recommendations and questions

I have no critical remarks on the work of Prof. Danail Danov, DSc, but I have a question:

What does he think about the popular practice nowadays of collecting students' mobile phones before classes, so that students could not use them during training?

7. Conclusions on the application of the candidate

After I reviewed all the materials and scientific publications, submitted by the candidate for participation in the competition, and analyzed their significance and scientific contributions to the theory and practice of foreign language learning and modern education, I confirm that the achievements of Danail Kirilov Danov meet the minimum national requirements and the Regulations of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" for holding the academic position of "Professor" at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in the professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of Education in...(Methodology of Foreign Language Education in a Digital Environment – English and Turkish).

I give my **positive assessment** of the candidacy.

II. GENERAL CONCLUSION

Based on the above, I recommend to the scientific jury to make a proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" for the election of Danail Kirilov Danov to the academic position of "professor" in the professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of Education in...(Methodology of Foreign Language Education in a Digital Environment – English and Turkish).

15 January 2025

Signature:

Prof. Penka Kaneva, PhD